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COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM

2157 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6143

MAJORITY (202) 225-5074
FACSIMILE (202) 225-3974
MINORITY (202) 225-5051
TTY (202) 225-6852

<http://reform.house.gov>

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For more information, contact:
Karen Lightfoot, (202) 225-5051

CAFTA HINDERS DEVELOPING NATIONS' ACCESS TO NEEDED MEDICINES

WASHINGTON, DC — Today Rep. Henry A. Waxman released a new report detailing how CAFTA and other Bush Administration trade agreements are impeding the rights of developing nations to acquire essential medicines at affordable prices.

“The trade agreements have multiple provisions that block developing nations from getting timely access to lifesaving drugs,” said Rep. Waxman. “The health implications of the trade agreements for the developing world are serious.”

The report, prepared for Rep. Waxman by the minority staff of the Committee on Government Reform, describes how CAFTA and six other trade agreements signed or under negotiation by the Bush Administration compromise the principles adopted in the 2001 Doha Declaration, an international agreement that trade accords should not interfere with public health and access to medicines.

Specifically, the Bush Administration trade agreements:

- **Delay approval of affordable generic drugs.** Under the agreements, developing nations cannot acquire low-cost generic drugs unless they have first given the maker of the brand-name drug five years of market exclusivity.
- **Require patent extensions.** Provisions in the agreements require developing nations to give brand-name drug companies patent extensions to compensate for delays in regulatory approval processes.
- **Restrict compulsory licensing.** Several of the agreements limit the conditions under which developing nations can authorize generic manufacturers to make inexpensive versions of patented drugs, even though this right to issue “compulsory licenses” is expressly recognized in the Doha Declaration.
- **Block parallel importation.** Contrary to the Doha Declaration, some of the agreements strip developing nations of their rights to import patented drugs from abroad at the lowest available prices.

The full report is available at www.democrats.reform.house.gov.